

When Christian's are in Willful Sin, Part 4 - 1 Corinthians 5:9-11 – November 9th, 2014

- Today's teaching will be part four of a series I've titled, "When Christian's are in Willful Sin."
 - We've been dealing with the delicate matter of willful sexual sin within this Corinthian church, and the serious threat it posed to this church.
 - Because the Apostle Paul was one of the main founders who planted this church, he cared about them deeply and he loved them intensely.
 - So much so, he was willing to take the risk of having some of them resent him for rebuking and correcting them for their arrogant carnality.
 - This because, Paul was keenly aware of how high the stakes were, such that, their tolerating of sexual sin was a matter of life and death.
 - I would suggest that this sexual sin was a matter of life and death in the physical sense and a matter of life and death in the spiritual sense.
 - I suppose you could say that the jury was still out concerning the very survival of this carnal church and the carnal Christians in this church.
 - If you and I were able to travel back through time and visit this church, I think we'd be somewhat surprised by what we'd see at this church.
 - The alarm clock would go off as it does every Sunday morning, and we'd yell at the kids to get out of bed and hurry up so we're not late.
 - Once we've got our family into the car, that we're still making payments on, we're still yelling at the kids to stop fighting with each other.
 - Then, when we pull into the parking lot of Calvary Chapel Corinth, we put on our Christian smiles and pretend we are the perfect family.
 - Much to our surprise, Calvary Chapel Corinth is a bigger church than we thought. It seems they're flocking to this church in large numbers.
 - We start asking ourselves why it is that this church is growing, going, and glowing. We wonder if it's because of the preaching of the Word.
 - We won't have to wait to have that question answered because it's not long before we realize what this church is all about, and not about.
 - It's not about the Word, that's for sure. In fact, people don't even bring their Bibles to this church; there's no need they're all about the love.
 - Here we are with our well-worn Bibles from the year 2014, and we're starting to get a little uncomfortable wishing we'd have left it in the car.
 - Then we soon realize being the only ones with Bibles isn't the only thing making us uncomfortable when we take our seats in a back pew.
 - Now we're increasingly uncomfortable with the man and woman in front of us who are behaving in a very inappropriate and sexual manner.
 - We start looking around for ushers, deacons, anybody who will do something about this, and much to our disappointment, nobody does.
 - As we look around for another place to sit, the worship team starts performing, and it becomes evident that there is no available seating.
 - We resign ourselves to just entering into a time of worship, when all of a sudden; somebody gets up and abruptly talks about us tithing.
 - We tell ourselves we're only visiting, and as such, we really don't need to put money in the plate, that is until the usher shoves it in our face.
 - At this point, we've gone from uncomfortable to mortified in the span of about three seconds as we reach for our money next to our Bible.
 - In our utter shame and embarrassment we give a little more than we may have hoping that our red faces will go back to their normal color.
 - Then it hits us the sermon hasn't even started and we're already trying to figure out how to slip out unnoticed when we're told greet people.
 - It's too late now we're stuck; the inappropriate man and woman in front of us know our names now. "Please God deliver me this church!"
 - Finally, it looks like the pastor is coming to the pulpit. Please Lord; don't let him go on and on. Let him preach his shortest sermon ever.
 - Wow, it looks like the Lord is answering my prayer, much to my delight he only talks for about 15 minutes. Amen and Amen! Let's go home.
 - Not so fast, while I may find myself delighted by the length of the sermon, I find myself disenchanted by the lack of strength in the sermon.
 - In fact, the more I think about it, there was no mention of things like the Holy Spirit convicting us of sin death to self or picking up your cross
 - Hmmm, I'm starting to connect the dots now. This explains why nobody did anything about the inappropriate couple sitting in front of us.
 - I guess, "It is what it is" as the saying goes. But, why do I still have this uncomfortable feeling in my spirit. Why does it have to be this way?
 - This could be a great church. Not just a good church, but a great church. They just need somebody with a spiritual spine to clean house.
 - They need someone who cares enough about this church. Enter the Apostle Paul, and with him, this fifth chapter here in First Corinthians.
 - Paul, with an unflinching fearlessness and a ferocious thoughtfulness, loves them enough to correct and direct them concerning sexual sin.
 - In verses 1-2, Paul says we're to confront them, verses 3-5 he says we're to remove them and in verses 6-8, we're to rid ourselves of them.
- 4. Do not associate with them (Verses 9-11)**
- v9 Paul tells them that he had written to them in his prior letter, not to associate with sexually immoral people.
 - v10 He says it doesn't mean the people of this world who are immoral, greedy and swindlers or idolaters, or they'd have to leave this world.
 - v11 They're not to eat with those claiming to be Christian's yet are sexually immoral, greedy, idolaters, slanderers, drunkards, or swindlers.
 - Allow me to first address Paul's mention of a previous letter to the Corinthian church. Where is this book and why is it not in our Bibles?
 - We actually addressed this on Thursday night as it relates to the Book of Jasher and the Book of Wars, and now we have another book.
 - The short answer as to why we don't have these books is; God in His sovereignty deemed it fit to not include them, as we don't need them.
- Of this one commentator explains, "The apostles wrote many letters to churches which we no longer have. Certainly such letters were inspired to speak to that specific church at that specific time, but not to all the church for all time. So, such letters were not preserved by the Holy Spirit, through the church."
- Be that as it may, let's look a little closer at what it is that Paul is saying as it relates to not even associating with people living in willful sin.
 - In order to do that it's very important that we take note of the distinction Paul makes between the professing Christian and the unbeliever.
 - He makes it clear we're not to associate with only professing Christians who were involved in willful sin, such as those he lists in verse 11.
- Henry Morris explains why in his commentary when he writes, The ultimate purpose of such discipline was to keep the reputation of the church itself wholesome and also to prevent "a little leaven" from "[leavening]" the whole lump."
- I'll close by posing a couple of questions I think we would all do well to consider, and in so doing, allow the Holy Spirit to search our hearts.
 - Am I comfortable in a carnal environment where anything goes, and everything is tolerated, under the banner of thinking I'm being loving?
 - Am I comfortable eating with, or even associating with someone who claims to be a Christian yet is involved in willful and unrepentant sin?